

**COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 9, 2004**

The meeting of the Maryland Commission on Human Relations was called to order on Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at 10:10 a.m.

**Present** Thomas Owen, Roberto Allen, Charles Cresswell, Barbara Dezmon, Norman Gelman, and Peter Lee.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** The minutes of the February meeting were accepted as written.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** Commissioners received copies of the Chairperson's Report (See attached). Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that Vice-Chair Hermina is working out of the country. Vice-Chair Hermina called Chairperson Owen to inform him that he is doing work for the State Department in the Near East. Hopefully, when Vice-Chair Hermina returns to the U.S.A. he will share his experience with the Commission.

Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that Human Rights Day in Annapolis went very well.

Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that following the Commission meeting in Annapolis on February 10, 2004 MCHR appeared before the House Budget Sub-Committee regarding its budget. Both the Senate and House Budget Hearings went very well. The committees accepted MCHR's budget as proposed by the Governor's office.

**SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Legislative** Commissioners received copies of an email from the Public Affairs Coordinator which summarizes pertinent legislation. Commissioner Allen informed Commissioners that MCHR has been asked to take no position on all legislation.

The Public Affairs Coordinator explained the electronic process for submitting bills.

House Bill 932 –  
Housing  
Discrimination  
Based on Source of  
Income

Commissioner Allen requested that the Public Affairs Coordinator find out whether the federal statute had source of income as a category and what if any other states may have it too. MCHR has been instructed by the Governor's office to take no position on this bill.

The Executive Director stated that this bill has been introduced for the last ten years. Source of income is already in the county codes of Howard, Prince Georges and Montgomery counties and in Baltimore City.

Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that House Bill 932 will be placed on the Retreat agenda. At that time strategies would be discussed as to how to get this legislation passed.

Strategic Plan

Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that the Strategic Planning committee met. Editorial changes were recommended. The plan will have to be revised due a proposal to eliminate the Systemic Unit as a result of staff cuts. Commissioners will receive a proposal for review prior to the Retreat.

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the Executive Director's Report (See attached). The Executive Director informed Commissioners that both budget hearings were held. The Legislative Budget Analyst recommended no further cuts. There was a decision hearing on MCHR's budget last week for the Senate. The Senate committee voted to adopt the analyst's recommendations of no further cuts. MCHR looks like it will fair okay on both the House and Senate side.

Community  
Outreach/Education  
Unit

Commissioners received copies of the Community Outreach/Education Unit's Report (See attached). The Public Affairs Coordinator informed Commissioners that the Training Specialist broke his leg and has been out of the office for a while.

Research on Cost-  
Per-Complaint

Commissioners also received copies of the Research on Cost-Per-Complaint (see attached) from the Public Affairs Coordinator. Chairperson Owen thanked the Public Affairs Coordinator for this information.

The Public Affairs Coordinator suggested that during the Retreat MCHR could discuss ways to come up with its own measure of cost per complaint.

AIMMS

Commissioner Dezmon would like to meet with the General Counsel and the Public Affairs Coordinator to develop a plan regarding the types of training for trainers that could be offered to assist in a Maryland State Department of Education partnership with the Commission. This partnership would involve addressing hate crimes and harassment in schools. Commissioner Gelman stated that the Police Department should be included in this partnership.

**DEPUTY  
DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the Deputy Director's Report (See attached). MCHR is on track in completing its contractual obligations.

**ASSISTANT  
DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the Assistant Director's Report (See attached). The FY 2004 budget is moving along. Federal funds will be transferred into the active account by the end of the third quarter. MCHR will finish in the black.

Information  
Technology

The Information Technology Manager informed Commissioners that MCHR's web site had its normal amount of visitors. EEOC has changed the way they handle data. They are moving toward a web-based system.

**GENERAL  
COUNSEL'S  
REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the General Counsel's Report (See attached).

Fair Housing  
Training

The General Counsel conducted Fair Housing Training at the Kent County Human Relations Commission.

NAHRW

The National Association of Human Rights Workers will conduct a training session on March 25, 2004 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.. This session will cover an array of topics. If any Commissioner is interested in attending this training please let the General Counsel know. Registration forms are available.

Commissioner Dezmon suggested that the Commissioners go to the Eastern Shore to look at the housing conditions.

**OLD BUSINESS**  
Retreat

Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that the Retreat will be held from April 22-24, 2004 at Harbortown in St. Michaels, Maryland. The monthly Commission meeting will be held on Thursday, April 22, 2004 at 4:30 p.m., dinner to follow. The Retreat will begin on Friday, April 23, 2004 at 9 a.m.

Commissioners received copies of the tentative Retreat agenda. If there are other suggestions of topics for the Retreat agenda please let Chairperson Owen know as soon as possible. The Strategic Plan will be placed on the Retreat agenda. Commissioners will receive a revised agenda prior to the Retreat.

The Executive Director would like Commissioners' participation as trainers during the Retreat.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.

Barbara Wilson